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ABSTRACT

This document contains the National Urban League's second annual "State of Black America", report which describes the condition of black citizens during the year 1976. The report examines developments in eleven major areas of life: the economy, employment, education, housing, health, social welfare, youth, crime, legislation, political involvement, and foreign policy. It also includes, for the first time, the results of a survey of Urban League affiliates from 107 cities across the country. The survey shows deepened depression and hardship among blacks. Employment and housing are the most crisis-ridden areas. The most important event for blacks in 1976 was the presidential election. They showed confidence in political leadership as a result of Jimmy Carter's victory. (Author/AM)

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The State of Black America 1977

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Statement by
VERNON E. JORDAN, Jr.
Executive Director
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
at
"STATE of BLACK AMERICA" Press Conference
Washington, D. C.
JANUARY 11, 1977

Today the National Urban League releases its second annual "State of Black America" report, documenting the manner in which black citizens fared during the year just ended.

We are sorry to say that it makes for grim reading; for 1976 was a year of continued hardship for black people, a year of unrelenting struggle for survival in a national climate marked by recession and by majority attitudes ranging from indifference to hostility toward the plight of minorities.

The report examines developments in eleven major areas of life, ranging from the Economy through Foreign Policy. It also includes, for the first time, the results of a survey of Urban League affiliates across the country; a survey that is revealing of the major problems black people face and our perceptions of them.

When we released last year's report, we stated that: "The slow but steady decline in racial cooperation and in the black condition became, in 1975, a headlong rush into the deep pit of depression and hardship." We are saddened to have to report today that our examination of the state of black Americans in 1976 reveals continued and, in some areas of life, deepened depression and hardship.

The survey of Urban League affiliates, rooted in the black communities of 107 cities, bears this out. The survey found that employment and housing are the most crisis-ridden areas. Every fourth black worker is unemployed today; two out of every three black teenagers in the labor force have no job. In housing, continued illegal discrimination, the low rate of housing production, the virtual end of the public housing program and new trends aimed at redeveloping black neighborhoods at the expense of their inhabitants, combined to seriously worsen the critical deficiency in housing opportunities for blacks and moderate income families.

These -- and other concerns -- of black people cannot be adequately dealt with unless there is a major thrust toward orienting our society to fulfill human needs. That the majority population remains relatively unconcerned with those needs finds support in our survey.

When asked to rate the concern of the white majorities in their cities on a scale of one to five, four out of five Urban League affiliates assigned a rating of two or less. Two out of five affiliates reported that black-white relationships deteriorated in 1976. Over a third reported less confidence in political leadership, most often based on the attitudes of local authorities they deal with on a daily basis.

Despite these alarming findings, I can report today that the single most characteristic attitude in the black community is hope. This too, is reflected in our survey. The overwhelming majority of affiliates reported the single most important event for blacks this year was the Presidential election, and over half reported more confidence in political leadership primarily as a result of Governor Carter's victory.

This confidence is based not only on President-elect Carter's statements during and after the election campaign, nor on his symbolic acts of solidarity with black people. Rather, it is largely based on the fact that the black vote was instrumental in making Jimmy Carter our next President, and the reality of political life that leads supporters of a successful candidate to expect him to pursue policies that reflect their interests and needs.

The policies black people are interested in achieving are also set forth in our report. The Urban League calls for a new Bill of Rights, a series of actions that, taken together, would answer the human needs of our society. We set forth in this report some 24 concrete steps that lead toward the fulfillment of those human needs.

This report has been delivered to President Ford, to President-elect Carter, to Vice President-elect Mondale, to the persons selected to join the new Cabinet, and will be distributed to members of the Congress, governors and mayors throughout these United States. These are the individuals who need to know of the plight of black citizens and who have the power and the responsibility to take appropriate actions.

For President-elect Carter and the members of his incoming Administration this report represents a challenge of the first magnitude. Our new President will come to office with the trust and confidence of black citizens who, for the first time in eight years, feel they can look to the White House for constructive action to bring about full equality for all Americans. This is a trust not easily earned and not to be taken lightly, for failure to realize long deferred action and failure to satisfy the just expectations of the deprived and neglected will be seen as a betrayal of the democratic process and all that entails.

We urge the President-elect to make a visible, public demonstration of his understanding of the needs of black people and of all poor people. We urge him to devote a significant portion of his Inaugural Address to let black people know his Administration will strive to remove the curse of poverty and joblessness from their backs, and to let white people know that this can never again be a land of racial discrimination and exploitation. We urge the President-elect to use the unique platform of an Inaugural Address to present to his fellow-Americans a vision of a more equal, more just society and to pledge his Administration to its achievement.

In a nation coarsened by official neglect and abdication of leadership in race relations, such a statement holds the promise of galvanizing the very considerable forces of decency and good among our people.

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INTRODUCTION

Of all the problems confronting Black America in 1976, none was more critical than that of unemployment. Of all the events that occurred during the Bicentennial Year none was more important in the eyes of Black America than the Presidential election. Of all the disappointments experienced by Black America over the past year, none was more disheartening than the widespread indifference of the American people to the plight of minorities and the poor.

Judged by accepted indices of progress -- income, educational attainment, family stability, etc. -- there was little cause for rejoicing in Black America as the nation marked its 200th birthday. But as the year drew to a close, something appeared in Black America that had not been there for almost a decade -- the first faint sign of optimism about the future.

Perhaps more accurately, it was more of a hope or a wish, than optimism. After eight years of a national Administration that blacks -- rightly or wrongly -- regarded as hostile to their needs and aspirations, they now feel that 1977 might bring a change in direction and that possibly the same type of moral leadership that led the nation to accept the legitimacy of black demands for equality during the 60s, might once again be present in Washington.

This conclusion is based on the results of a survey conducted by the National Urban League among its 107 affiliates strategically

located throughout the United States. With roots that go deep in their own communities, these affiliates are in a unique position to feel the pulse of Black America, to probe its thoughts and attitudes, and to accurately assess "The State of Black America-1977."

The executive directors of the affiliates were asked to complete a seven-part questionnaire, after consultation with staff and community sources. The first question asked for a listing of the major problems facing black communities, in order of priority. The remaining questions sought to establish the mood of the communities.

What the survey revealed is important for all of America, for it explores areas which are seldom exposed to public view, but which need to be viewed if the reality of black life in this nation is to be understood. Each of the summations of the responses is followed by a statement or statements taken from the completed questionnaires. The statements were not selected to provide a composite picture of all the responses, but rather to present the majority view.

The results of this survey make it clear that as America rings down the curtain on her 200th birthday, her entry into the third century finds her largest minority still shackled by serious problems that will require more attention than they have ever received before, if the gap that separates this minority from the majority is ever to be closed.

Listed as the major concerns within Black America in order of priority were the following: employment, housing, education, health and social welfare, politics and community planning, public safety and crime.

EMPLOYMENT

Eighty-five percent (85%) of the affiliates listed employment as the primary concern of their constituents. They reported that many blacks, while actively seeking work, had been unable to find jobs and that women and young people were especially hard hit.

Specific job needs cited by the affiliates were entry level jobs for youth, management level positions for the college graduate, and training opportunities for the unskilled and semi-skilled.

In addition to the general adverse economic climate, several other reasons cited for the high unemployment rate in black neighborhoods included civil service testing, abuse by local governments of programs designed ostensibly to aid disadvantaged workers, the use of the seniority system rather than affirmative action concerns in deciding who would be affected by layoffs, and inadequate public transportation between black communities and job sites.

One of the midwestern affiliates reported the employment situation in the following words:

"There is still a disproportionate amount of black unemployment as compared to that in the white community. An employment report recently showed that the number of blacks in the work force is less than the blacks that could work. This indicates that some persons have became discouraged, as in other parts of the country, and have decided to give up looking for work."

HOUSING

Reporting an intense need for inner-city revitalization and safe sanitary housing for the poor and people with moderate incomes, as well

as those living on a fixed income, the affiliates listed housing as the second greatest concern of their communities.

Several of the affiliates reported the persistence of discrimination against blacks with money to buy homes, and the continuation of the process by which blacks are "steered" into already segregated neighborhoods.

Redlining -- defined as placing certain areas off-limits for the making of mortgage loans -- was also described as a problem. Abuses were cited in the Housing and Community Development Block Grant Program of HUD and other government programs which make them unresponsive to the housing needs of blacks, especially blacks with little money and large families.

Among the specific housing needs cited were rehabilitation, housekeeping information, mortgage supplements, appropriate counseling and referral services and scatter-site, integrated, low-cost housing.

The response from one midwestern affiliate, was typical in describing the housing situation:

"The city remains segregated. Adequate housing for the working poor is in short supply."

EDUCATION

In 1976, "busing" did not have the same dramatic importance as it had the previous year. Integration remained important while increased interest was focused on quality, career-orientated education. Reading and arithmetic levels of school children were listed as one of the primary concerns and there was a call for more parental involvement in the educational process.

Administrators and teachers need to be more accountable to parents and pupils, the affiliates said, as they called for more black decision-makers in school administations and for programs to evaluate the public schools.

Other major needs cited were comprehensive career counseling programs closely coordinated with community resources and aligned with the business sector, and creative techniques to bring about quality integrated education.

The strength of the feeling about the type of education black children are now receiving was expressed by an Ohio affiliate in describing the educational needs of the community it serves:

"Drastic improvement in the academic achievement of students, particularly in basic subject areas as reading, reading comprehension, and math computation as well as more performance accountability for educators."

HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE

In the health area, the problem of affordable and accessible health services geared to the needs of blacks was seen as most pressing. The young and the very old were seen as most affected by the lack of such services.

Improved health care delivery systems, possibly through neighborhood health clinics, were prominently mentioned as an approach toward solving the problems described above.

There was almost total agreement that welfare reform could only be accomplished through a national income maintenance program accompanied by a national health plan.

The health needs of blacks were put in the following context by a southern affiliate:

"The number of facilities that can and will serve the poor are very few. Programs which are designed to work primarily on diseases which

affect black persons (hypertension, sickle cell) have enormous difficulty securing funding. There is practically a complete absence of neighborhood health clinics."

POLITICS AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

Increased black representation in planning, policy and decision-making was cited as the fifth problem area. Blacks should "become a part of the decision-making process at all levels so the concerns of blacks can be reflected in the growth and development of the community," is the manner in which an Illinois affiliate put the matter.

Blacks need to translate their numbers into political representation, and into representation on policy-making boards. While political participation was seen to be up, few rewards for political support were seen as forthcoming.

Exercising very little decision-making powers, blacks were found by the affiliates to be still at the mercy of benevolent government officials who orchestrated programs to meet their own perceptions of the needs in the black community. As a result, black concerns generally were not reflected into such program efforts.

Unity and strong community organization along with increased political action, involvement, and influence were seen as prerequisites for blacks to gain access to city and county government administrations.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME

This issue appeared time after time in the list on priorities with affiliates calling for crime prevention and control, and especially suppression of black on black crimes and drug abuse. A need was seen

for better police protection in black communities and for swifter trials. On the other hand, there was a concern that many law enforcement officials were anti-black and that police-community relations should be enhanced. Also of concern was the disproportionate number of blacks incarcerated in penal systems, especially youthful offenders. Unequal treatment in the court system was pointed out as one reason for high recidivism among black ex-offenders.

An effective public defender program to help poor people with legal problems, more community-based prisoner rehabilitation, and more and better prison rehabilitation programs were seen as needed reforms to help prisoners re-adjust to the community. Compensation for victims also was suggested as a measure needed to help relieve the sting of crime in black communities.

Two views, the first from an affiliate in the South, and the second from an affiliate in the midwest, spoke to the crime problem and approaches toward reducing it.

"Increase safeguards or crime prevention programs in the black community to protect against black on black crime and also the drug abuse problem."

"Improvement of police-community relationships between the black community and the law enforcement officials. This includes the total criminal justice system that appears to be anti-black."

ATTITUDES

In all four Urban League regions, Eastern, Central, Southern and Western, affiliates were asked, "On a scale of 1-5, representing low to high, how would you rate the concern of the majority community toward the needs of blacks?"

Most (78%) rated white concern at a 2 or less. Fewer than 1 in 4 (22%) rated white concern. None rated it higher.

The ratings made it clear that in 1976 the majority community evidenced little interest in the problems of blacks. In seeking causes, the affiliates most often reported that the struggle for economic survival and social and political uncertainty were so overriding that whites, engaged in protecting their self-interests, had little time to concern themselves with the plight of black people.

Only in a clear crisis situation was there manifestation of concern and even then, whites were for the most part unsympathetic and unwilling to go the "extra mile," the affiliates reported.

Particularly distressful to the affiliates was the fact that majority politicians did not respond to the needs of blacks. A "benign neglect" philosophy seemed to be the nationwide rule and as a result, the black community grew increasingly isolated in 1976.

From an affiliate in a large midwestern city which gave the status of majority community concern a 1.5 rating came this analysis:

"We select this rating rather than 1.0 because there is some residual carry-over from the civil rights movement which raises the level of concern above the lower limit. The majority community, however, clearly is more preoccupied with immediate self-interest and is more economically conservative and accepting of the status quo in terms of social problems than in the recent past.

"They are also more negative about the possibility of alleviating major social maladies and are more oblivious to the minority community than at any time in the last 15 or 20 years."

An affiliate in the Deep South gave a 3 rating to majority concern and commented:

"Generally, there have been shown some signs of concern by the white community. Where this concern has been most prevalent, however, has been in areas where there are common problems for whites and blacks, such as employment, high prices, health care, etc. On the other hand, there are those persons who only feign public concern which seems to disappear when the real crunch comes and there is an actual opportunity to do something about the problems facing the black community."

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Asked if there was more confidence in political leadership -- or less -- than at the same time in 1975, affiliates gave mixed answers. Over half (56%) reported "more confidence" principally on the strength of an air of guarded optimism following Jimmy Carter's victory.

But significantly, 37 percent reported less confidence in political leadership in 1976 as compared to 1975. Another 7 percent reported no change or that it was impossible to detect a difference. Where there was less confidence reported, "local leadership" was most often the reason given. While the Carter victory brought an aura of expectation, and hopefulness on a national level, the majority of local elected officials were reported as concerned only with what it took to get re-elected.

There was, however, a shift among blacks from hopelessness to hopefulness and a renewed hope in the new national administration's sensitivity.

Blacks in 1976, in the main, continued to be uncertain, distrustful, and skeptical about local, state, and national political leadership.

Reporting on confidence in political leadership, a southern affiliate said:

"Confidence in political leadership at this point seems to be lower than the low point of 1975 for most sectors of the community, particularly among the poor, the working class, and the lower middle class.

"The constant political rhetoric of the 1976 election year somewhat challenged the lack of confidence and cynicism of many sectors of the community toward political leadership, especially in regard to the Presidency. However, we should not mistake the good voter turnout for the 1976 elections as a measure of greater confidence in political leadership.

"It would be safer to analyze this as a rising tide of concern and desperation about the present condition of a political and economic climate that has spawned unemployment and undermined efforts to deal effectively with human needs."

BLACK-WHITE RELATIONSHIPS

When asked to describe the status of black-white relationships -- if they have improved or deteriorated -- affiliates answered that black-white relationships were stagnated (22%), deteriorated (42%) or too complex to assess (4%). Fewer than 1 in 3 (32%) reported improved relationships.

When questioned further for factors to which the black-white relationship could be attributed, affiliates answered as follows:

. Where relationships have deteriorated, affiliates cited as one of the prime reasons the fact that whites are no longer willing to support those activities aimed at reducing poverty. Urban-suburban conflict, differing economic interests, different perceptions of social responsibilty, and isolation of blacks were also cited as contributing factors.

Whites, the affiliates reported, have reacted negatively to HEW's racial questionnaires, school desegregation, busing, affirmative action, and other government efforts. Blacks were quoted as citing a leadership vacuum and apathy among themselves as contributing to the deteriorated black-white relationships.

. Where relationships have improved the factors listed were an influx of black professionals, voting sophistication among blacks, improved media coverage, attitude changes among young blacks and whites, some gains in housing integration, and a more sophisticated approach among blacks which rejects an "all or nothing" philosophy in favor of a "peaceful co-existence" approach.

. Where relationships remained stagnant there was a consensus that the pace of black efforts to improve their position has slowed, but that the negative relationships are covert and waiting for precipitating events to come out into the open.

One of the few affiliates to report an improvement in black-white relationships is located in the Deep South. In its comments, the affiliate reported:

"The status of black-white relationships have, most certainly, improved. Some aspects are directly related to politics, while others are attributed to a more wide understanding of blacks by whites."

More typical of the responses was the following from an affiliate in the East:

"Black-white relations have deteriorated in the metropolitan area over the past year -- representing an extenuation of urban/suburban conflicts of economic interest, and fundamental differences in perception about social

responsibility and human needs. Whites are more outspoken than ever before in reaction to a supposed black hostility toward them, about fears for their personal safety, and in expressions of alienation and/or isolation from city affairs."

And this from an affiliate in the Far West:

"The present status of black-white relationships is wary. For those blacks who have 'made it,' i.e., succeeded economically and socially, there is less tension between them and white middle and upper-class people than between more impoverished blacks and their counterparts.

"The main factor in this deterioration is white lack of concern over black needs and problems. Since black equality is no longer as popular a cause as it was during the civil rights days of the 1960s, less energy goes toward it.

"The result has been a reduction in blacks attending institutions of higher learning, a reduction in improved housing for blacks, a reduction in affirmative action programs, particularly in employment. For blacks, it's still 'last hired, first fired.'"

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Affiliates were also asked "What institution has been most effective in promoting equality of opportunity? Least effective? (i.e. schools, government, business, etc.)"

Government -- city, county, state, and national -- was reported to be most effective in 42 percent of the responses. Next most effective was business and industry (15%) and schools (13%). Civil rights groups (11%) and courts (6%) also were reported to be effective institutions.

On the other hand, 13 percent of the responses indicated that no institution was effective. The least effective institutions in promoting equal opportunity were identified as schools (36%), government (32%) and business and industry (30%).

Summing up the responses of plurality of the respondents, an affiliate in the Midwest said:

"Reflecting the increased intransigence of the private sector, the Federal Government has been most effective in promoting equality of opportunity. The least effective institutions in promoting equality of opportunity have been those within business and industry."

BLACK MILITANCY

Nearly all affiliates, when asked if they had been able to distinguish either a rise or decline in so-called black militancy, answered that there was a decline (82%) or no change (10%). Only 8 percent reported a rise in black militancy during 1976.

Some affiliates reported that the obvious decline in militancy was associated with a new pragmatism among blacks who are becoming a part of the American Process. Others suggested that black militancy has been subdued by white militancy, i.e., law and order, giving rise to frustration among blacks, loss of financial support; loss of moral support and apathy. Dollar power, voting power, political influence, intellectual militancy, persuasion, collaboration and conciliation and cooperation seems to have replaced black militancy, the affiliates reported.

On the issue of black militancy, a western affiliate commented:

"There has been a marked decline in the more overt forms of black militancy. However, there appears to be a more sophisticated and astute form of black militancy seeking more permanent changes within the institutional arrangements.

"An interesting observation is that there appears to be a significant increase in membership in -- and influence of the black church, as if we are on the verge of a spiritual revolution."

IMPORTANT EVENT

There was agreement among the affiliates (81%) that the single national event with the greatest importance for black people in 1976 was the Presidential election. For a few (6%) rising unemployment was more important. Other events -- NAACP court ruling, upturn in economy, inflation, Barbara Jordan's convention speech, Joan Little, busing, oil crisis -- accounted for the remainder of the responses.

On the international scene, the overwhelming majority of those who reported (88%) agreed that African liberation efforts held the greatest importance for blacks in 1976.

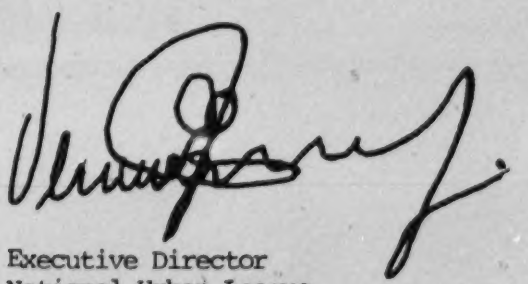
A southern affiliate assessed the election in this manner:

"It symbolized hope, food on the tables of the hungry, better housing, greater opportunities for participation in government, a chance for some concern to be shown for the needs of blacks and poor people; and at least, a partial 'breakaway' from the Watergate Era."

There was also this note of optimism from an affiliate in the Northeast:

"Hopefully the election of Jimmy Carter will offer new programs designed to improve the plight of black, minority and poor Americans."

The attitudes expressed through the survey represent, in large measure, the results of what took place in Black America during 1976. The story of this appears on the following pages and it indicates that in those specific areas where it is possible to measure some degree of progression or regression, that blacks ended in the Bicentennial Year in approximately the same position that they began it.



Executive Director
National Urban League
January 11, 1977

THE ECONOMY

While there were indications of a slight economic recovery among whites, the recession of 1975 continued unabated in the black community throughout 1976. Joblessness was just as pervasive among blacks in the Bicentennial Year of 1976 as it was during the height of the recession in 1975.

Although the official jobless rate for blacks edged down from 14 percent to 13 percent between 1975 and 1976, the number of unemployed blacks remained at 1.5 million during both years -- the largest number of jobless blacks ever recorded by the Labor Department. Two years ago, in 1974, less than one million or ten percent of all blacks were unemployed.

However, when the "hidden unemployed" (i.e., discouraged workers and part-time workers who want full-time jobs) are added, black unemployment doubles to three million -- equalling the record high in 1975. Thus, for the past two years, actual black joblessness has remained at the depression-level of one out of every four workers.

Teenage Jobless

But the most alarming jobless rates of all in 1976 were those of black teenagers. Officially, two out of every five black teenagers in 1976 who actively sought work were unemployed. According to the NUL Hidden Unemployment Index, however, close to 60 percent of all black teenagers who wanted jobs in 1976 could not find work. Thus, the jobless picture for black teenagers was just as bleak throughout 1976 as it was during the peak of the recession of 1975. In fact,

unemployment among black teenagers has been at depression-levels even during periods of prosperity. Even in 1975, for example, one-third of black teenagers were officially unemployed. Thus, thousands of black youth are reaching adulthood without having acquired work experience necessary for successful careers as adults.

Black Vietnam-era veterans are another group of black youth that continues to experience excessively high rates of joblessness. The unemployment rate for black veterans, 20-24 years old, in 1976 was 26 percent -- almost double the 15 percent jobless rate for comparable age white veterans and one and a half times the rate for black youth, 20-24 years old, who never served in the Armed Forces. It is ironic that, in this 200th Year of Independence, thousands of those who were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice to defend that freedom on foreign soil find themselves denied equal access to employment back home.

Adult Unemployment

Although joblessness was most acute among young people, black adults and family breadwinners were far from unscathed by the unrelenting recession in 1976. While the one million unemployed black adults in 1976 was somewhat below the number in 1975, it was more than 50 percent higher than the number of jobless black adults in 1974 -- before the current recession reached its peak.

Even two-parent black families -- the keystone of the black middle-class -- were significantly impacted by the severe economic decline. Between 1974 and 1976, the number of unemployed married black men jumped from 153,000 to 225,000, raising their jobless rate over the two-year period from 4.3 percent to 6.5 percent.

This sharp increase in joblessness among male heads of two-parent families resulted in a disproportionate increase in wives entering the labor force to supplement family income. Today, about two-thirds of the wives of unemployed black men are either working or actively seeking work, compared to less than half in 1974.

But black female heads of household found it much more difficult than black male heads to obtain gainful employment. While almost seven percent of black male household heads were jobless in 1976, almost twice as many (13 percent) black women heading households were unemployed. Since about one-third of black families are headed by women, it is clear that millions of black children are being reared in families with unemployed heads. In fact, today, about one-third of all black children under 18 are in families in which the male or female heads are unemployed or not in the labor force.

UI Ineligibles

Contrary to popular belief, about half of the jobless workers in 1976 did not receive any jobless benefits -- and this was particularly true among blacks. Since being laid off is a primary criterion for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits, about half of the official 1.5 million jobless blacks were categorically ineligible because they were entering the labor force for the first time (e.g., students), reentering the labor force (e.g., housewives) or had quit their last job. Thus, about half of the black jobless do not in fact receive the "universal" income cushion of UI benefits and must therefore depend on some support from relatives or friends or go on welfare. It is evident that thousands of American families have and are experiencing greater economic hardships

as a result of the recession during 1974-76 than is commonly believed.

Rising Poverty

Record-level unemployment and inflation resulted in the sharpest increase in poverty in America ever recorded. For, in 1975 (the latest year for which poverty and income data are available), the total number of poor persons increased by 2.5 million to 25.9 million. But, unexpectedly, poverty increased about three times faster among whites than blacks. While, the number of blacks below the official poverty level rose by 363,000 to 7,545,000 in 1975, the number of poor whites shot up by 2,034,000 to 17,770,000.

On the other hand, while the proportion of whites below the poverty level rose from nine to ten percent between 1974 and 1975, the proportion of blacks who were poor increased from 30 to 31 percent. Thus, blacks were still about three times more likely than whites to be poor at the onset of the Bicentennial.

Furthermore, 27 percent of all black families were officially defined as poor in 1975, compared to eight percent of all white families. But, over half (54 percent) of all black families fell below the lowest Bureau of Labor Statistics budget level of $9,588 -- which the Labor Department estimated was needed to maintain a "lower" standard of living in 1975 -- compared to one-third of white families.

Family Income

Family income among blacks, according to revised Census Bureau figures, apparently kept pace with rising inflation in 1975, but failed to do so among whites. While median family income among blacks rose ten

percent from $8,006 to $8,779 between 1974 and 1975, white median family income went up by 6 percent -- from $13,408 to $14,268. Thus, the real purchasing power of white families declined by three percent, while real family income among blacks remained unchanged.

The proportion of middle and upper-income blacks leveled off as a result of the combined effects of recession and inflation. While the proportion of middle-income blacks (i.e., those above the intermediate BLS family budget level of $15,318) went from 22 to 23 percent between 1974 and 1975, the proportion of upper-income blacks (i.e., those above the higher BLS family budget of $22,294) held at ten percent. At the same time, about half (46 percent) of all white families were above the intermediate BLS level, while one-fourth (24 percent) were above the higher BLS family budget level.

In recent years, median family income has continued to have its largest gains among blacks in the south, while the gap between black and white family income has widened somewhat outside the south.

These relative economic gains in the south may in part account for the increasing reverse migration of northern blacks to the south. One out of every three black migrants from the north moved south between 1970 and 1975, while only 16 percent of the blacks migrating from the south went north over the five-year period.

Family Stability

The declining economy had some of its most devastating effects on the family structures of both black and white families. For the first time in the nation's history, the number of divorces exceeded one

million (1,026,000) in 1975 -- up from a record-level 970,000 in 1974.

And in one of the most dramatic reversals in family patterns in decades, female-headed families are increasing at a much faster rate among whites than blacks. While the number of female-headed black families rose by six percent between 1973 and 1975, the number of female-head families among whites increased by 12 percent. And while the number of black children in one-parent families went up by seven percent, the number of white children in one-parent families shot up by 16 percent between 1973 and 1975.

On the other hand, over two-fifths (43 percent) of black children are in one-parent families, compared to about 13 percent of white children.

Moreover, studies by such social scientists as Harvey Brenner, have revealed that rising unemployment directly correlates with increases in mental disorders, alcoholism, homicide, suicide, heart and other vascular diseases and infant and maternal disorders.

It is evident that this nation needs to develop social and economic policies that reinforce and strengthen families -- and not weaken them. And this time, the "case for national action" is needed with regard to white as well as black families.

It is now clear that the economic decline in 1974-76 has had a devastating impact, not only on the employment status of black and white workers, but on their family stability as well.

And, although the American economy is said to be experiencing some recovery, no such recovery has reached the black community. A renewed commitment to full employment for all Americans who want work and not a dole is vitally needed at this juncture.

EMPLOYMENT

As of June, 1976, there were 10.8 million blacks in the labor force out of a total labor pool of 94.6 million. Blacks were holding 9.4 million jobs and 1.5 million were officially listed as unemployed. Blacks thus accounted for 11.4 percent of the civilian labor force; 10.7 percent of total employment and 20.3 percent of all unemployed persons.

Over the past decade, blacks have made employment gains, but they still tend to have a disproportionate share of the jobs in low wage industries and to be underrepresented in high wage industries.

In examining what occurred to blacks in the area of employment during 1976, two major developments stand out. The first was a growing "backlash" against affirmative action programs in both the private and government sectors.

The second was the painfully slow recovery of black workers from the economic recession of 1974-76 and the indications that if present national economic trends continue through the remainder of this decade, the impact on blacks will be particularly negative and they will have little opportunity to narrow the gap that now separates them from white workers.

Affirmative Action

The attacks against affirmative action programs were being mounted by the private sector even before 1976, but the Bicentennial Year saw the emergence of two additional sources of attack --

the courts and federal bureaucracy.

The attitude of the courts toward these suits was confusing. In some instances they affirmed the right of minorities to seek relief under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and of employers and unions to adopt affirmative action plans to eliminate the effects of past discrimination against minorities.

In other cases, however, the court accepted the doctrine of so-called "reverse discrimination," and struck down affirmative action plans, generally on the principle that blacks cannot be given job preference over whites because of past discrimination. The most recent example of such a ruling -- at the time of the writing of this report -- occurred in New Jersey where the State Supreme Court threw out an order by a state civil rights agency that would have compelled the town of Montclair to hire more black policemen and firemen to correct racial imbalance.

What will happen to the concept of affirmative action will probably be decided in 1977, since the Supreme Court agreed in 1976 to review a California case in which "reverse discrimination" against a white in a college admission program has been alleged.

Even the federal government itself in 1976 seemed to have lost its commitment to affirmative action. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was hopelessly backlogged with complaints and there appeared to be little chance of resolving thousands of these cases. Indeed, the top administrative position within EEOC itself remained vacant during much of 1976. Because of this,

blacks and other minority workers saw little hope of using a federal mechanism mandated by law to find solutions to their complaints of discrimination on the job.

Government Relaxes Rules

Similarly, the government attempted to relax the requirements that federal contractors provide equal employment and promotion opportunities for minorities and women as specified by Executive Order 11246. The proposed new regulations would decrease the number of contractors falling under the Executive Order by raising the size of the required work force from 50 to 100. The dollar level at which the pre-contract compliance reviews would have to be conducted was raised from $1 million to $10 million. Such reviews have proven to be one of the most effective methods of insuring the development of affirmative action plans by contracting firms.

In addition, under this new thrust, the Department of Labor would allow companies to satisfy their affirmative action requirements by training minorities and women without being obligated to hire them. The possible repercussions for minority workers are obvious. With fewer companies required to submit written plans for minority hiring and with employers only being required to train, not necessarily, hire minorities, thousands of jobs for minority workers can be lost.

The proposed regulations raised such a storm of protest from the civil rights community that the Office of Federal

Contract Compliance Programs -- charged with the responsibility of enforcing the Executive Order -- held up their implementation and scheduled a series of regional hearings.

The postponement of implementation, however, did not lessen the implications of the regulations being issued in the first place. Their issuance seemed to signify, to state the matter bluntly, another example of what was conceived by many blacks as a growing coolness within the federal bureaucracy toward affirmative action.

Finally, late in the year three large federal agencies -- the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor and the U. S. Civil Service Commission -- announced new employee selection guidelines that a number of civil rights organizations believe will significantly reduce the employer's obligation -- including the federal government, state and local governments and federal contractors and subcontractors -- to hire minorities and women. Significantly, the EEOC disconnected itself from the new guidelines.

Taken together, these actions in 1976 could only be interpreted as attempts by the bureaucracy to undercut the already limited effectiveness of affirmative action programs mandated either by law or Executive action.

Pressures on Prime Sponsors

Additionally, during the past year, the government placed increased pressure on the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act

(CETA) prime sponsors to use the State Employment Services to provide direct job placements for CETA clients, despite the ES's long history of minimal service to the minority community.

This history has been documented by the Department of Justice's Federal Programs Section which released a report on the Employment Service program in December, 1975. This report cited a number of findings including the underrepresentation of minorities on many local Employment Service staffs (some states had no minority executives or managers at all), the lack of systemized methods for determining the number of minorites serviced and the improper referral of ES-related discriminatory complaints by many offices.

It was also found that most EEOC offices indicated that they had received complaints about local ES office staff and/or services to minority clients. They also stated that ES's rarely, if ever, required information on the compliance status of employers using the ES and seldom referred discrimination complaints about employers to EEOC.

The report also found that few local ES's offer encouragement to or provide technical assistance to employers seeking minority workers to carry out affirmative action programs. Similarly, some local ES offices were found to still be using occupation tests which have not been validated for minority use. Finally, it was found that ES field offices servicing

primarily minority clients were often housed in less attractive buildings and provided fewer services to clients. This is just a partial listing of the findings of this report, showing a history of questionable services to minority and poor workers.

In the "State of Black America-1976" it was reported that there had been a shifting of emphasis with CETA funds, from hiring those most in need to helping those recently unemployed and with higher educational levels. Figures from fiscal year 1976 show little change in that pattern. Additionally, the number of blacks serviced under Title I, the basic training and recruitment part of the Act, have dropped more than one percentage point, from 38.5 percent in 1975 to 37.1 percent in 1976.

Black Business Down

Any discussion of black employment must perforce include an examination of black business, and here, the picture in 1976 was anything but encouraging. The latest available figures for the nation's 100 leading black business firms showed a decrease in revenues in 1975 of 7.6 percent, down from $675 million to $623 million, a net loss of $52 million.

Given the nature of the economy, there is little reason to believe that 1976 was any better for these firms. Black Enterprise Magazine estimates that there was actually an 11.8 percent decline in real dollar figures when inflation is taken into account. Of the top 100 firms, the top ten produced

almost 40 percent of the sales, clearly indicating that the large majority of black business continues to be small. In fact, 94 percent are single proprietorships, and 84 percent have average annual receipts of only $13,000. Fewer than 20 percent have any paid employees and two-thirds of all black businesses are concentrated in the service-related industries. These are the black businesses that were hit hardest in 1976, primarily because they rely largely on the black community for sales.

Opportunities for black business to expand to wider markets are frustrated by such problems as their small sizes, and lack of capital and expertise. Ideally, these small businesses should be able to expand their markets through such means as government contracts. But in fiscal year 1975, while the federal government spent approximately $63 billion for goods and services provided by private contractors, black and minority businesses received only two percent of these federal contracts, or less than one percent of the dollar value of these contracts.

Future Outlook

In looking toward the future, it is obvious that the resumption of progress by blacks, that has been checked by the two recent recessions, depends on whether the federal government takes steps to provide more stimulus to the economy. One of the nation's most distinguished economists, Dr. Andrew A. Brimmer,

put the matter in this perspective:

"I agree that inflation is a serious and continuing problem, and the implementation of public policy must be cautious. However, we still have an enormous backlog of unused human and material resources, and this reserve will give us ample room for the expansion of production for quite some time before output begins to press against capacity.

"If such a policy were followed, the main beneficiaries would be poor whites, blacks, and members of other minority groups on the edges of the national economy -- who now face considerably less than a hopeful prospect for the remainder of the present decade."

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EDUCATION

A look at the nation's school enrollment statistics in 1976 shows that the education differentials between black and white young adults continued to narrow although there still remains a noticeable gap between the two groups. The proportion of high school graduates actually rose faster for blacks than for whites between 1970 and 1976, with the latest figures showing the black completion rate at 72 percent compared to 85 percent for whites.

In addition, black school enrollment rates have approximated that of whites in several age groups. This is markedly true for children 6 to 16 who are affected by compulsory school attendance laws and whose attendance is almost universal. At the nursery and kindergarten levels black five-year-olds were enrolled in schools at an 87 percent level compared to 90 percent for whites. (In 1970 these figures for blacks were more than nine percentage points below that of whites). In the 16 to 17 year old group, both blacks and whites have the same proportion of attendance, about 88 percent.

Along with the 700,000 black children attending nursery school and kindergarten, the 4.6 million in elementary schools, and the 2.1 million in high schools, were another 800,000 blacks enrolled in post secondary education.

The largest group of these students, 549,000, were enrolled in four-year colleges or universities, including graduate schools.

Slightly more than 100,000 blacks were attending vocational schools, primarily business, commercial, technical and vocation trade schools. The remainder of the blacks in post-secondary education were enrolled in two-year colleges or in proprietary vocational schools -- those schools run by private industry to train their own employees.

Some differences between black and white enrollment by type of schools were apparent. Black students were more likely than white students to be enrolled in vocational education institutions and less likely to be in universities.

Blacks in Public Colleges

Looking at only four-year colleges, blacks were more likely to be enrolled in public four-year colleges, while whites were enrolled equally in public and private four-year colleges.

This fact underscores a major concern expressed by black educators during 1976 about the "low or no tuition movement." This movement, subsidized by the federal government and applicable only to public institutions, would be offered as a substitute for federal and state student scholarships and loans.

Many black educators feel that support should be directed at the needs of the individual rather than at the needs of the institution, as low or no tuition would be. Additionally, they are concerned that such a movement would confine the choices of educational institutions of black students to public

institutions, rather than giving them the full range of choices that scholarship and loan programs do.

It should also be pointed out that even now 50 percent of all black college graduates receive their degrees from black colleges, which are primarily private institutions and those excluded from participation in the low or no tuition payment.

The importance of the problem is further underscored by the numbers of blacks attending the prestigious highly-selective, private institutions. In the fall of 1976, only five percent of the entering freshmen of these institutions were black, compared to 19 percent for the less selective public institutions. It is a well known fact that graduates from the more prestigious institutions are more likely to go to graduate level study, and while the numbers of blacks attending graduate school has increased, they are still few and far between in some fields of study, particularly the sciences and mathematics.

Difference in Earnings

It also should be pointed out that the percentage of white college graduates in 1976 was two-and-a-half times more than the percentage of black college grads.

Similarly, the Census Bureau statistics show that the average white male high school graduate still earns more than the average black male who has completed college.

Black women college graduates earn less than men with high school diplomas. Minority women earn the lowest wages, have the least desirable jobs and the highest unemployment rates. Compounding this problem is the fact that today black females are dropping out of high school at a rate increasing faster than that of black males. This trend, first noticed in 1973, is being studied by the Howard University Institute for the Study of Educational Policy, which is soon to publish a detailed analysis of the data. It has broad implications for the future employment of black women, many of whom seem destined to be heads of households.

For blacks, as for whites, college attendance for young adults (18-24 year-olds) tends to increase with family income. At the $5,000 per year level, college enrollment for a family member 18-24 years was about equal for black and white families.

However, at the $10,000 and over income level, a higher proportion of white (45 percent) than black (33 percent) families with a family member 18-24 had a member enrolled in college.

During the Bicentennial Year, the National Urban League published a pamphlet, written by Dr. Nancy L. Arnez, Acting Dean of the School of Education at Howard University, on "The Struggle for Equality of Educational Opportunity." In that document, she made the following observation:

"Black people have struggled for quality education during their more than 300 years in America, first as slaves, then as segregated persons and now."

This struggle continued unabated in 1976 with the most pronounced development being the increased concentration by blacks on the problems of the public schools themselves -- the curricula, the financing, the counseling services, the politics.

There was a growing realization that these basic elements do much to determine the quality of education and if blacks -- who are especially dependent on public education -- are ever to achieve real equality of educational opportunity, then these problems must be of prime importance.

The urgency of this was underscored by mounting evidence that the public schools are indeed slipping in the overall quality of education they provide, which is most easily measured by such indices as reading and math scores and S.A.T. scores. During this past year, the S.A.T. scores have shown the fact that reading and math achievement scores for even the nation's top high school graduates are continuing their downward spiral.

Within the black community other black educators are beginning to examine the questioning of special programs for the disadvantaged as being too costly or too unsuccessful. They are looking at the rise in the cost of college fees concomitant with the decrease in the availability of public and private scholarship programs, the demise of open admission programs and successful legal challenges to affirmative action admission and hiring policies. They are taking notice of the increasing reluctance of communities to tax themselves further for public education.

They are beginning to ask if this kind of erosion of support for public education isn't a serious threat to black Americans, who have historically educated their children in public schools. If not public education for black children, then what?

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HOUSING

1976 was a year of noose tightening in housing for blacks and other low income groups as they faced increasing competition in the marketplace from more affluent groups.

This situation developed because of two factors. First, overall housing starts never exceeded 1,500,000 units for the year, so that gross additions to the existing housing stock totaled less than two percent. Housing analysts, however, have found that in order to provide adequate housing for a growing population and replacement of decaying units, an annual construction rate of four percent is required.

The second factor was the jump in the cost of new housing construction -- up to $50,000 in 1976 from $41,000 in 1975.

Because of the shortage in construction and the price hike, there was increased demand for older housing and prices rose an average of 30 percent in 1976, thus pricing many low income persons out of the marketplace.

Added to the problem of inadequate housing supply was the continuation of a trend which has been developing in several cities during the past few years. This trend sees a growing number of middle income whites moving back into center cities, where they rehabilitate the housing and ultimately change the character of the community. Because of this, growing numbers of lower income families, including many blacks, are being displaced.

Several Urban League cities including Washington, D.C., St. Louis, New Orleans, Hartford and Rochester, have reported this phenomenon,

which is due to a number of factors, including the desire of families to be more conveniently located to jobs, the increase in the cost of commuting to the suburbs, the inflated cost of housing in suburban areas, the availability of funds for redevelopment and "urban homesteading," and the push by many local governments to make cities more attractive to these middle income taxpayers by building new cultural centers, shopping districts, etc.

While no reports or studies have been done on this "counter-migration," the fact is that it is happening. During 1975, the Housing and Urban Development Department published a report on Neighborhood Preservation, which looked at 100 cities, including "historic preservation," which they defined as a locally initiated program designed to preserve residential neighborhoods.

It pointed out that early historical preservation programs focused on landmarks of historical value. However, the report also stated that this is essentially a middle and upper income housing program and that the cost of restoring these homes is above the means of low and moderate income families, who are often displaced when deteriorating neighborhoods become fashionable. Thus, "historic preservation" is a part of the phenomenon to which we refer.

While it is desirable to bring middle income families back into the cities thus creating economically integrated neighborhoods, it should not be done at the expense of lower income families who are not provided with adequate low and moderate income housing.

Community Grant Program

Despite the federal government's Community Development Block Grant Program, which identifies the economic integration of housing as one of its seven objectives, the amount of money spent for this objective is so negligible that HUD itself has not found an adequate way of measuring its expenditures in this area.

Instead, 40 percent of CDBG funds used in neighborhoods classified as minority by HUD, have been used for land clearance purposes while only 14 percent of funds spent in these areas have been used to rehabilitate housing or support housing construction.

A second development in the area of CDBG funds is the use of these monies according to the triage theory which postulates that the best way to use limited funds is not for those communities which will survive without them or for those communities which need massive amounts of funding to survive, but for those middle communities which will improve with limited treatment.

The NUL has found the triage strategy for community development in widespread use throughout the country during 1976, following regional conferences sponsored by HUD to promote that strategy in 1975. As a result, funds appropriated by Congress to provide better housing, suitable living environments and expanding opportunities principally for low and moderate income persons have not been used for these groups.

On the other hand, during 1976, the amount of federal housing subsidy given to white middle income families increased dramatically. This increase took the form of a new "tandem plan" allowing mortgage

lenders to loan to home buyers at below market interest rates and sell the mortgages to the federal government at market rates.

Funds for this one program for middle income families amounted to $3 billion in 1976 -- equal in amount to the total funds allocated for lower income housing subsidies. In addition, another $12 billion was allocated to middle income home buyers directly through income tax subsidies. Finally, middle income families also received one half of all CDBG funds, as indicated in last year's "State of Black America."

Subsidized Housing

Subsidized housing, which is of prime importance to blacks and other low income groups, presented a somewhat confused picture in 1976. In order to meet its goal of commitments for 400,000 units by the end of the fiscal year, 1976, HUD extended the year by three months and ended up with a projected 490,000 unit commitment.

However, since 50 percent of the total commitments were made during the three month extension and HUD field offices were under great pressure to increase contracts before the November election, there is reason to question whether the commitments will actually be met.

Also, two-thirds of the new units are reserved for elderly tenants, whereas two-thirds of the need for subsidized housing is for tenants other than the elderly.

Finally, throughout the year HUD refused to issue commitments for the traditional Public Housing Program, even though Congress

specifically mandated the agency to reactivate the program in 1976.

On the positive side of the housing picture, HUD contracted in October with the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing to conduct a 40 city audit to determine the extent of housing discrimination and fair housing law enforcement. This will be the first such survey.

In addition, as of September 30, 1976, all mortgage lending institutions have been required to file data showing the geographical location of mortgage loans. As this report goes to press, significant amounts of data from this disclosure have not yet been analyzed. However, several groups active in the campaign against "red-lining" or the denial of mortgages to certain communities, are expecting to have such information early in the new year.

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HEALTH

Health manpower continued to remain a critical problem for blacks in 1975. While some urban communities have an adequate number of health professionals, most minority communities are not so favored because of the limited number of black health professionals.

The average physician ratio in the United States is 1 to 700. In black communities in inner-city areas, the ratio is a staggering 1 to 3,000.

Of some 350,000 medical doctors in the United States, only 1.7 percent, or some 6,048 are black. Of 150,000 dentists, only 3,000 are black. Of 800,000 registered nurses, 60,000 are black.

The chances that the number of black doctors will be materially increased any time within the near future were diminished in 1976, when for the first time in six years, the number of minority students entering medical school decreased. In the school year, 1975-76, black students entering first-year medical classes represented 6.8 percent of the total. This, compared to 7.5 percent the previous year.

The rising costs of a medical education undoubtedly played some role in bringing about the decrease, but the possibility that medical schools, under attack for their affirmative action programs, may have staged a retreat rather than risk charges of

"reverse discrimination," cannot be discounted. Such a matter deserves further study.

Heart Disease Statistics

Heart disease continued to strike disproportionately at blacks, with males the most likely victims. The ratio for whites with heart disease was 12.0 per 100, while for blacks, it was 24.4. Black males had a 26.7 per 100 heart disease rate as compared to 12.8 per 100 for white males.

Income has a great deal to do with health care and because of this, black Americans generally receive less medical care than whites and consequently suffer more serious illnesses for longer periods of time as economic considerations cause them to postpone seeking help as long as possible.

Some idea of the general health conditions of blacks can be gleaned from statistics that show blacks lose an average of 7.1 days a year to illness, as compared to 5.8 days for whites.

Blacks also continue to live shorter lives than whites. A comparison of what will happen to 1,000 white and black babies born in 1974 is instructive in this regard.

Using the mortality experience in 1970 — the last full year for which figures are available — by 1977, 982 whites will still be alive, compared to 969 blacks — a difference of 13. By the year 2000 the respective numbers would be 963 and 936. In 2039, when both groups would be entitled to Social Security, there would be only 581 black survivors, compared to 738 whites.

Odds Against Children

The possibility for a child to have a healthy and normal life span begins with their parents and is increased by services to pregnant women and children. But as a report by the Children's Defense Fund in 1976 pointed out, black children have the odds stacked against them.

- Black mothers die in childbirth three times as often as white mothers.
- Low hemoglobin levels or other nutritional deficiencies are found twice as often among black Americans as among white Americans, affecting one out of every three black children.
- Among children whose families earn less than $7,000 a year, 37% had not seen a dentist in over two years and 21% had never been to a dentist.

Immunization of children is an effective method of preventive childhood diseases. Yet, in 1976, over five million children between ages one and four were not adequately immunized against polio and rubella and other preventable communicable diseases. The largest sufferers are those in central cities, poor and black Americans.

Health Legislation

The major health legislation passed in 1976 with implications for minority health was Public Law 94-317 (The Consumer Health Information and Health Promotion Act). Title I of that Act is intended to provide national goals for health education and information and preventive services and to make recommendations on education, assurance policies, manpower resource, and further to provide the research, technical assistance and demonstration programs necessary to foster health education information and prevention activities.

The intent of the legislation for minority Americans is positive, but the legislation must await approval of implementation plans and financial appropriations. The value of this legislation to black Americans is dependent on its application.

On the negative side of the ledger, the failure of the 94th Congress to develop and pass comprehensive national health security legislation will continue to have an impact on the health of black Americans, for until the nation's health delivery system is one that provides equal services to all Americans regardless of income, black and poor Americans will continue to suffer from limited and unequal care.

The quality of health services must be the same for all Americans, and accessibility must be as equal. For black Americans, the question of access to quality care when needed and available preventive care before illness is crucial.

SOCIAL WELFARE

Social welfare programs, dealing primarily as they do with the most vulnerable members of our society — the poor, the young, the aged, the handicapped — have a special importance for black Americans, since a disproportionate percentage of them are in this position.

Therefore, black Americans were adversely affected by the Administration's attitude toward social welfare programs in 1976 that ranged from neglect to hostility, typified by the President's frequent use of the veto and the negative character of social welfare legislation proposed by the Administration.

As an example, one piece of social welfare legislation, HR9803, was vetoed early in the year by President Ford, who was opposed to providing additional federal funds for day care, and to raising standards for day care personnel, despite the rising number of working mothers, and the desperate need by families for reasonably priced high quality day care services. A modified law, HR12455 was, however, eventually passed and it included an additional $240 million for day care and postponed the applicability of personnel standards until the fall of 1977.

Attempts by the Administration to pass a food stamp "reform" bill, HR422, which would have eliminated or reduced significantly benefits to ten million people, failed. Significantly such an effort was mounted in the face of Department of Agriculture's statistics which underscored the need for food programs for the poor.

Welfare Rolls Increase

While the Administration was pushing its policies of retrenchment, the nature of the social welfare problem in America was growing more serious. One clear indication of this was in the increase from the previous year of the number of unemployed parents who were forced to go on welfare.

Figures supplied by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, for the period January-April, 1976, showed an increase ranging from 25 to over 33 percent. When the fact that these unemployed parents can only obtain welfare after their unemployment benefits are exhausted is taken into consideration, the gravity of the situation becomes apparent.

Welfare is the last stop and unless these recipients can find re-employment, there is a strong possibility that they will become permanent welfare recipients.

Of all the vulnerable black children in America, none were perhaps more vulnerable than those trapped in the foster care system.

It is estimated that approximately 100,000 black children are currently in our foster care system, often shuttled from home to home, from school to school, from one set of parents to another during childhood. It is thought that about 40 to 50 percent of those black children in foster care are eligible for adoption. Large numbers are concentrated in urban areas.

It is expected that the number of children, both black and white, available for adoption will show an increase in the near future because of the efforts of child advocacy groups. However, this will

not mean much to those black children if the findings of a growing number of black adoption workers are true.

These observations include the belief that black families are not recruited by adoption agencies and that high agency fees and outmoded evaluation methods tend to eliminate black families from the adoption process.

Minority Aged Vulnerable

Another of the most vulnerable groups in our society today is the minority aged, who, despite the social security increases and the presence of the supplementary security income program, are worse off than in 1970 when compared with elderly whites. In 1970, the minority aged were twice as likely to be poor. A 1975 Bureau of the Census Survey (using 1974 figures) revealed that the minority aged are now 2.4 times as likely to be poor than white older Americans.

Many of these elderly minority must depend solely upon limited social security benefits and/or public assistance programs for their incomes since they worked as domestics and agricultural workers, and did not come under Social Security until the 1950's. An added disparity is created when the death rate of blacks, especially black males, is considered. Only 58 percent of blacks can be expected to live to collect social security benefits, compared with 73 percent of white Americans. Thus, less than 60 percent of black Americans who have made contributions to Social Security will live to collect any benefits.

During the year there was a total absence of anything which might be labeled welfare reform designed to make the system more responsive

to the needs of people. In one way, this might be considered a victory for the poor, since the only proposals seriously considered by Congress in the name of "welfare reform" would have eaten away at existing rights, entitlements and protection.

The events of the past year have once again demonstrated that it is imperative that quality social services be provided to all those in need. For, contrary to popular belief, most persons in poverty do not receive even the basic benefits to which they are entitled. In fact, 60 percent of all poor households in the U.S. do not receive either welfare or food stamp benefits. And half of all welfare recipients were not in the food stamp program in 1975 -- when the recession was at its peak.

Clearly, intensive efforts are required at the Federal, State and local levels to insure that all those in need are helped.

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YOUTH

Black youth is in a crisis situation.

The facts speak for themselves.

. The official unemployment rate for blacks 16 to 19 years old is over 40 percent; the National Urban League's Hidden Unemployment Index sets the true figure at 64 percent.

. A third of all black men and women between the ages of 20 and 24 are jobless, and that includes black men who laid their lives on the line during the Vietnam conflict.

. Black young people have been so relentlessly excluded from job opportunities that they've dropped out of the labor force in unprecedented numbers. In 1950, two out of three black men 16 to 19, were counted in the labor force. By 1975 only two out of five were in the labor force. During that period the percentage of white teenagers in the labor force actually rose.

. In the next age group, 20 to 24, the labor force participation rates for black men dropped by almost ten percentage points in the last 15 years.

Entry Jobs Decline

These dropouts from the labor force had very little choice in the matter. Many of them were pushed out. The opportunities for entry level jobs declined and a new barrier of credentialism was placed around many of those who remained, leaving millions of young people out of the running for jobs that used to be theirs.

The cost to American society is incalculable, but the results are plain to see in rising youth crime rates, alienation and apathy.

There is obviously something seriously wrong with the way America perceives its youth and something is wrong therefore, in the way it prepares them for participation in today's world.

The time has come for the nation to recognize that its strength is dependent upon the quality of its young people, and that ways must be found to involve them productively in society before they pass into adulthood. America should view her young people as resources rather than as problems and recognize that traditional institutions and approaches to youth development, while still needed, cannot bear total responsibility for developing our young people in a modern world.

What is needed is a national policy that will encourage both public and private investments in youth as a future national resource.

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CRIME

Black Americans continued to be deeply affected by the high crime rates which plagued their communities across the country during 1976. Their concerns were indeed well grounded, for black Americans remain more likely to be the victims of crime than anyone else.

In the 1976 "State of Black America," it was pointed out that black Americans were four times as likely to be robbed than whites; twice as likely to be assaulted and four times as likely to be raped. Nothing has significantly happened during the past year to change those figures.

Although the public often is led to believe that the majority of this country's offenders are black, just the opposite is true. In 1975, 72 percent of all suspects arrested were white, with blacks making up only 25 percent.

Several well publicized outbreaks of juvenile violence in Detroit and New York focused attention on juvenile crime in 1976, though the problem had actually been escalating for several years prior to that. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report, juvenile crime increased by 28 percent during 1975, the most recent year for which statistics are available.

However, instead of tackling the monumental problems of youth unemployment, boredom, and alienation that lies at the root of much juvenile misbehavior, the nation began to harden its attitude toward youthful offenders spurred on by the reasoning that the way to deal with the problem is to "get tough."

For instance, in New York State the legislature redrafted laws to include younger offenders and attempted to set mandatory sentences for juveniles. With jails already overcrowded, and the rehabilitation of offenders more a myth than reality, it is difficult to see how this "get tough" approach will do anything to reduce what almost everyone agrees is a major problem.

The Drug Traffic

While there was a hue and cry for more police action against the young, there was no public outrage expressed on the part of the greater community over the fact that in many inner-city areas narcotics continued to be openly sold to minority youths with the police seemingly powerless to do anything.

New York City offers an example of the low priority given to fighting the menance of drugs within the black community.

With about 35 to 40 percent of the nation's drug addicts living within New York City, the city's budget for narcotics prosecution has dropped from $2.4 million in FY74-75 to $1.1 million in FY76-77. Additionally, New York City receives only three percent of the federal funding for narcotics prosecution. The result of this can easily be seen in the black community where drugs are sold openly day and night as drug pushers hawk their ware to any passerby.

An additional factor in the drug picture has been the rise of a number of minority narcotics dealers and the involvement of blacks in the upper echelons of the illegal drug industry.

Yet, in spite of the high rate of crime in black communities and upsurge in narcotics traffic during the past years, little official emphasis has been placed in solving either of these two problems within the black community.

It is only when the community itself attempts to combat crime that the problem is seriously addressed and such mobilization of local black communities occurred with increasing frequency during the past year.

For example, Harlem residents and community organizations and businesses began an anti-crime campaign early in 1976. In Philadelphia much attention has been focused on the successful attempt of the House of Umoja to stem the violence of Philadelphia gangs.

But because of the lack of official commitment and funding, these programs and others like them were only partially successful. The Harlem crusade has been successful in moving drug traffic off some targeted streets -- only to have it re-emerge elsewhere in that same community. The House of Umoja, while it was able to help curb the number of gang-related deaths in Philadelphia, cannot possibly reach all Philadelphia gang members or provide the kinds of services it knows these youth so desperately need.

One key to the successful fight against all crime, including crime in the black community, is the involvement of black law enforcement officers at all levels of the criminal justice system.

Lack Of Representation

In last year's report, the lack of black or other minority representation within the ranks of the FBI and of the Law Enforcement Assistance Agency was underscored. While the FBI seems to be making a low-key effort to hire minority agents now, if the Bureau continues to hire black agents at its present rate, it would be 2012 before blacks would make up 11.7 percent of the Bureau's agents, matching the percentage of blacks in the nation's total population. Currently only 1.3 percent of the FBI's special agents are minority.

The Law Enforcement Assistance Agency, the nation's one federal vehicle for innovation and reform, fares little better. During 1976, while the actual number of blacks in policy-making positions increased, so did the entire LEAA staff, so that the proportion of blacks in these positions has actually decreased.

On a positive note, through the efforts of Congresswoman Barbara Jordan and the Congressional Black Caucus, an amendment was attached to the LEAA legislation providing a built-in mechanism for the enforcement of civil rights legislation. This new law has not yet been tested.

This amendment sets up a procedure whereby once a complaint of discrimination is made, there must be an administrative hearing and either an agreement must be reached or funds must be shut off. Additionally, it gives federal courts, or agencies and state courts the right to make the finding of discrimination. Thus, if EEOC

investigated a local police force and found evidence of discrimination, LEAA would be bound by law to take notice of the finding.

It is difficult to gauge with total accuracy the number of minority police officers in the nation, primarily because no one federal agency seems to take note of that number. While the Uniform Crime Report reports the number of local police officers county by county, and breaks these figures down into male and female, it makes no mention of the number of minorities. However, the latest published figures for 1973 from EEOC indicated that of the nation's total of 312,872, police, about six percent were black and about three percent were other minorities.

They also showed that while almost four percent of these officers were women, less than one-half of one percent were black women. Since these are 1973 figures, compiled before the recession and its concomitant lay-offs, it is difficult to assess just how many minority law enforcement officers there are now in the U.S. It could be logically assumed that many minorities and women who had only recently been hired, were the first laid off.

The low priority given to minority community input into anti-crime programs, coupled with the small number of blacks in both federal and local criminal justice programs provide the minority community with little impact on either planning or implementation of anti-crime programs. Additionally, few black contractors have been awarded Justice Department monies for a variety of projects,

including those which have immediate impact on the minority community. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1976, the Department made 187,947 contract grants of $165,223,000, of which, 4,725 were awarded to minority contractors at a dollar value of $1,190,000.

Research Monies

Likewise, money for research and program development aimed at controlling and preventing crime continues to flow to Ivy League universities, while black campuses receive only small amounts of funding.

In spite of the need for minority criminologists, little money goes into the black university's criminal justice training programs. For instance, a consortium of seven predominately white colleges and universities each received $750,000 over a three-year period for their criminal justice curriculum efforts. Their coordinating office received an additional $350,000. The total expenditure for this consortium was nearly $5.7 million.

In contrast, a consortium of nine black universities was awarded $570,000 over a 14-month period -- or $64,000 a year for each black school versus $250,000 per year for each white school.

As a result, much of the current research on crime comes from organizations with little contact with the black community. Such lack of contact has resulted in recommendations for "get tough" policies for criminals and a refusal to deal with the social causes of criminal behavior.

The ultimate evidence of the nation's "get tough" policies towards criminals surfaced with the Supreme Court's decision to uphold the death penalty for murder in July, 1976. With more than half of those now on death row being minorities and the great majority being poor, this decision will inevitably have a disproportionate impact on these two parts of the American population.

There are several ironies, with respect to criminal justice, that black Americans must live with today. Blacks, who are disproportionately victimized by crime and thus deeply concerned about it, are also those most affected by the inequities of the criminal justice system. Although blacks are more likely to be murdered, robbed and raped, they live with an understanding of the social and economic conditions which create crime in modern day America. Blacks are more likely to be victims but less likely to have imput into the criminal justice system through black law enforcement officials, through training programs or through local self-help programs.

It is a situation that cries out for resolution.

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LEGISLATION

Taxes, jobs and congressional spending priorities emerged as the gut issues during the second session of the 94th Congress. Veto battles raged between the President and Congress with that body able to override only four out of the 15 vetoes. Justification for those vetoes was fiscal necessity -- that is, a desire to reduce excessive spending.

Congress in turn accused the President of not expanding the budget in an effort to combat inflation. It was Congress' view that such expansion was necessary, especially given the high rate of unemployment. Despite two presidential vetoes, passage of a $3.7 billion public works jobs program was a highlight in the legislative impasse between Congress and the President.

That legislation offers a unique opportunity for those state and local governments in areas of substantial employment -- 6.5 percent or more -- to address the joblessness among those unemployed for 30 days or more, the underemployed, and the severely disadvantaged long-term discouraged workers.

Other key legislation enacted by the 94th Congress included such measures as the extension of the general revenue sharing act, tax reform and civil rights attorney's fees bill.

Changes In Revenue Sharing

Notably, many civil and social rights organizations and coalitions fought hard for passage of various measures. The general revenue sharing legislation as a prime example, now contains a strong nondiscrimination provision. Procedures and timetables for withholding funds are spelled out. The remedies available to a complaining party are detailed and attorney's fees for the prevailing party are available. New reporting requirements, increased citizen participation, mandatory public hearings are also a part of the new Act.

For minorities, these provisions represent small victories in the ongoing fight to understand and impact upon the new approach to federal funding -- block grants. General revenue sharing represents a harbinger of things to come. It provides an opportunity for citizens to begin to learn how state and local governments function -- a citizens training ground for other block grant programs such as manpower, health, law enforcement and housing.

In addition, and equally important is the stronger civil rights provision under general revenue sharing. This provision offers an opportunity to sensitize the local elected officials to the concerns of various segments of the community as well as removing some of the mystique of "New Federalism."

Another important piece of legislation for the poor and minority community seeking redress where civil rights have been violated, is the civil rights attorney's fee bill. Regardless of the merits of the case, it is clear that litigation can be expensive to the point of financial disaster.

Congress therefore enacted this legislation in recognition of the fact that the enforcement of all civil rights laws has depended for the most part on the bringing of suits by private individuals and groups. Attorney's fees, therefore seem essential if private citizens are to have meaningful opportunities to redress their grievances.

While highlighting only two measures impacting upon the poor and minority communities, we recognize that there were many others. We recognize too that there is a tremendous job to be done in the next session. Such sensitive issues as full employment, especially youth unemployment, the economy, social security, low and moderate housing construction, welfare reform, urban revitalization and consumer protection, remained unaddressed in any substantive way.

The year 1977 offers the new Administration and the 95th Congress an opportunity for new legislative initiative. With the promises of President Carter still to be fulfilled and with a Congress now committed to fiscal accountability and responsibility through the new Congressional Budget Act, expectations are indeed high.

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POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

A watershed in the history of black political involvement was reached on November 2, 1976, when an estimated two-thirds of the nation's black voters went to the polls where 94 percent of them cast their votes for Jimmy Carter, and in the process provided his margin of victory in such key states as Missouri, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi and Maryland.

Much of the credit for the turnout belongs, quite properly, to the efforts of non-partisan black institutions such as the churches, the black press, the Joint Center for Political Studies, the NAACP, and the National Urban League, who, without outside help, mobilized the black community into action.

Some 34 national black groups, including the National Urban League, joined in a cooperative "Operation Big Vote" campaign, while several conducted individual campaigns as well, such as the NUL's "76 in '76."

Apart from the obvious role the black voter played in helping to fashion the Carter victory and the impressive demonstration of the power of black institutions to influence their constituents, three other major developments emerged from the November election.

A Myth Destroyed

The first was the destruction of the myth that black voters, in the main, are apathetic about the political system.

The second was the overwhelmingly favorable response of black voters to a candidate from the South. Prior to the passage of the

Voting Rights Act of 1965 it would have been inconceivable that any candidate from the South -- shackled with the necessity of having had to appeal to racial fears to assure local election -- could garner a lion's share of the black vote on a national basis. Thus the election of Carter can be seen as opening up new possibilities for politicians from that region.

The final development was in the nature of a warning to both political parties of the danger in discounting the black vote. In a close election, such as that in 1976, the black vote can be the balance of power, but it can only be captured if a political party actively seeks it and offers candidates who evidence some concern for those issues of importance to black voters.

This the Republicans did not do in 1976.

The Republicans virtually conceded the black vote to the Democrats from the very beginning of the campaign. They offered no incentive to the black voters to rally to the support of the GOP banner and in addition, their Presidential candidate was perceived by black voters as a decent man, but not one who would take the initiative in pushing programs and policies to aid minorities.

When the Republicans did finally make a move toward the black voters their efforts were so clumsy and so insensitive to the feelings of blacks, that they probably hurt themselves more than they helped.

In the first instance, the Republicans published a booklet containing the picture of a number of black government employees to give the impression that these employees owed their jobs to the Ford Administration. In fact, the vast number of the people portrayed in the booklet were civil service career employees.

In the second attempt to influence black voters, the President Ford Committee authorized an advertisement for insertion in black newspapers that carried a picture of the President meeting with two civil rights leaders, Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., Executive Director of the National Urban League, and the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Executive Director of People United to Save Humanity (PUSH). The use of the picture gave the misleading impression that the two men were endorsing Ford.

The third effort, on the eve of the election, involved the sending of telegrams to black ministers directing their attention to the refusal of a black by the Plains Baptist Church.

To its credit, the White House disavowed these activities, but the damage to the integrity of the GOP campaign had been done.

Blacks Underrepresented

During the year, the number of black elected officials showed some slight increase but the percentage of such officials still totaled less than one percent. A situation is thus being maintained in which blacks are badly unrepresented in the ranks of elected officials. As an example, for every 100,000 non-blacks there are approximately 257 elected officials, and for every 100,000 blacks, there are only 16 black elected officials.

On the national level, the House of Representatives and the Senate, provide another picture of black underrepresentation in the elected political arena. There the 17 Congresspersons and the one Senator represent approximately three percent of the Congress. They speak -- not only for those who elected them -- but quite literally for all of black America. This is indeed a heavy burden -- a burden not thrust upon or demanded of other elected officials.

In spite of the limited number of political offices held by blacks, their political empowerment entered a new era in 1976 that bodes well for the future.

The national election clearly showed that never again can a political party, with the hope of winning national office, afford to discount or minimize the black vote; never again can the abilities of non-profit community-based organizations and national black groups to effectively deliver a heavy voter turnout be doubted.

Never again will the regional origin of a candidate dictate his or her electability -- and as a corollary, just as a Southerner could be elected to the Presidency, as time moves on so can a member of a minority group.

And never again will blacks have reason to doubt that their votes can be the decisive factor in national elections.

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FOREIGN POLICY

After years of inattention to the black nations of Africa, the United States in 1976, prompted by evidence of growing Cuban and Russian influence on that continent, began to invest her prestige and powers of persuasion on the side of black Africans in their struggle to achieve majority rule.

For black Americans, a number of whom had been urging the United States for years to take such action, the development was the year's most important occurrence in the area of foreign relations.

In an about face, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger took the initiative in the formulation of an African policy, engaged in two rounds of shuttle diplomacy to help bring about majority rule in Rhodesia, and actively sought support for his policies from black groups -- including the National Urban League.

Never before had a Secretary of State made such a deliberate effort to explain the rationale and implications of U.S. policy to black groups and never had one so assiduously courted black support.

The Secretary's actions were widely interpreted as an end to the coolness that America has shown to black Africa and a recognition of its importance in the scheme of world order.

Attention Shifted to Africa

World attention shifted to Africa in 1976 primarily because of the political realities.

Americans became aware of the fight for independence being carried out by those Africans still under European domination. Mozambique,

Angola, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde Islands attained their independence with the fall of the Portuguese government. While both Mozambique and Guinea Bissau had strong independence movements capable of taking over the reins of government, Angola found itself in the midst of civil war among the three liberation movements in that country. Despite warnings from many Africa experts and diplomats, the U.S. found itself, along with South Africa backing the losing forces in that war. Coupled with the revelations that the U.S. had been paying members of these groups through the CIA, the choice to take sides in the war put the U.S. into an even more unfavorable light in the eyes of black Africans.

Having faltered in its initial involvement in Africa, the U.S. acted much more wisely when it assumed the role of mediator in the troubled Rhodesian scene. Its efforts were successful in that they were instrumental in bringing Ian Smith forces and those of the black nationalists to the conference table in Geneva.

The Case of South Africa

There was much disappointment during the year that the U.S. had not spoken out forcefully against the noxious apartheid existing in South Africa, but at the very least, there was general agreement within the black community that an initial important first step had been taken.

In the long run, the situation in South Africa will in all probability become even more important to Black Americans than current conflicts elsewhere, because of the peculiar set of circumstances that exist in that nation, including heavy American financial involvement, the intransigent stand of the white government against any sharing of power with blacks,

the growing unrest among the black South Africans, and the large number of people involved.

Following a fact-finding visit to that country in 1976, Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., Executive Director of the National Urban League, warning that a possible bloody race war would be in no one's best interest called on the American government to use its influence to push South Africa toward change.

He also called on American corporations -- with billions invested in South Africa -- to form a Corporate Alliance for Black Progress, which, because of its economic power, would be able to apply pressure on the government to ease its racial policies.

The response from the corporations has been disappointing.

Eventually, the question of majority rule in South Africa is going to have to be settled. It was clear to black Americans that this last holdup of white minority government in Africa, cannot continue to exist in its present form. And events within South Africa are developing so rapidly that U.S. policymakers will not have the luxury of unlimited time in which to frame policies supportive of the inevitable changes bound to come in that nation.

State Department Employment

However, the State Department itself, needs now to put its own house in order, beginning with black and minority employment. Figures made available to the National Urban League by the State Department show that although 15.32 percent of the agency's employment force is minority, minority employment at the four highest levels is extremely

low. For example, only two out of 45 career ministers, the highest level of employees are minority group individuals (one black, one Hispanic). In the Foreign Service Offices only 4.25 percent are minority and in the Foreign Service Reserve Corps only 9.31 percent are minority. In the category titled Foreign Service Staff only 548 employees out of a total of 8,758 are minorities (6.6 percent).

In the two lowest levels of employment, Civil Service GG and Civil Service GS, the workforce makeup of minorities is heaviest with a 28.9 percent and 39.79 percent respectively. It is the minority employment in these lower levels of State Department employment which produces the overall 15.32 percent figure.

The most alarming factor is that there were fewer minorities, in total numbers and percentage wise, employed by the State Department in 1975 than 1974. In 1974, the State Department's workforce consisted of 1,915 minority employees or 16.01 percent while in 1975 that figure slipped to 1,875 employees or 15.32 percent. During this period the total number of employees rose from 11,960 to 12,247.

Total black employment went from 1,616 (13.5 percent) to 1,585 (12.94 percent). Most disturbing is the fact that in two highest grades there was no significant movement upwards. In fact, the percentage of black foreign service officers declined because the number remained constant.

Another cause for concern is the assignments received by black foreign service officers. Since 1949 there have been 25 black ambassadors and all but five have been assigned to African or Latin

America countries. Of the current six minority ambassadors all are serving in Latin America or Africa.

A series of meetings were held with black groups and black leaders late in the year for the express purpose of exploring methods by which minority representation could be increased in the State Department.

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Last year, in its report on "The State of Black America-1976", the National Urban League concluded:

"In the context of the recent past, no year has been more destructive to the progress of blacks than 1975."

The facts spoke for themselves. The growing income gap between black and white, the depression level of unemployment in black communities, deteriorating public school systems, the indifference of the national Administration to the problems of minorities and the poor, and to the plight of the cities.

In cold statistics, as spelled out in the preceding pages, the overall position of blacks did not materially improve in 1976, and indeed in some areas -- most notably affirmative action -- blacks suffered further setbacks. The past year did, however, see several positive developments whose significance should not go unmarked.

. Neither of the two Presidential candidates made any effort to appeal to the dark side of the American voters by raising their fears and suspicions along racial lines. "Busing" and "law and order," with their subtle connotations of racism never became issues to divide and confuse the American people.

. Civil rights and related groups joined in a coalition to formulate and implement a highly successful nationwide non-partisan voter registration and education campaign. In so doing, they helped strengthen the political process by establishing the power of the black vote and laying to rest the myth that blacks have given up on the process.

In both instances, the actions were in line with recommendations set forth in "The State of Black America-1976."

In its totality: the Bicentennial Year was not a time of celebration within Black America. The problems spawned of racism and neglect were still too much a part of everyday life to permit the majority of blacks the luxury of venerating the past. For them, the present was what mattered. For many, life was reduced to the basic issue of survival from day to day.

Once again in 1976, America chose not to recognize the seriousness of her racial problems. And once again, the problems did not go away; they continued to exist, pushing blacks and whites further apart.

As a new national Administration assumes office this month, no more important task faces it than halting the drift toward permanent, separate societies -- the haves and the have-nots. The Administration and the nation would do well to ponder on the wisdom of Abraham Lincoln's warning in 1858 that "a nation divided against itself cannot stand."

While Lincoln spoke of the North and the South, the same can be said in our age, of black and white. All Americans must draw closer together. The alternative could well spell the doom of this nation.

What America wishes to achieve, she can achieve. And no achievement could be more vital to her future than the completion of the task begun in 1776 with the promise: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..."

A step toward that completion should embody the adoption -- as national policy -- of a new Bill of Rights that speaks to the human needs of today's society -- needs that could not have been prophesied at the writing of the original Bill of Rights.

A new Bill of Rights, as a minimum, would establish the right to a quality education for all children; the right to economic security by the provision of jobs to all those able to work, and an income maintenance program for all those unable to do so; the right to health so that decent health care would be assured for all, regardless of ability to pay; the right to family stability through the alleviation of outside pressures that tend to drive families apart; the right to safe communities so that no neighborhood need live in fear of crime and violence and finally, the right of our cities to survive, to prosper and to flourish as the centers of our economy and of our civilization.

The new Bill of Rights would not be a single document but rather a series of actions that when completed would establish an America, strong not only in material wealth, but strong in her most precious resource -- people.

We believe that the time is at hand for a new beginning. In her third century, America has the opportunity to demonstrate to a watching world that an open, pluralistic, integrated society is mankind's best hope for the future.

This report concludes with a number of recommendations that we believe can help bring about that type of society.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

THE ECONOMY

1. A national income maintenance program that would assure every American a liveable minimum income should be adopted as a replacement for the present welfare system. The program would be accomplished through a universal refundable credit income tax that in its application would provide a basic annual grant or tax credit for all.

2. Existing tax loopholes should be closed and a tax system created that would be more equitable than the present illusion of a progressive tax system that actually takes more from the pockets of moderate income working people than it does the affluent.

3. Until such time as the tax system is overhauled, there should be direct tax relief to the lower wage-earners in the form of an increase in the personal exemption or replacement of the exemption by a tax credit.

4. In view of the admitted undercount by the Census Bureau of some 5.3 million persons in 1970, and since population is increasingly used in federal grant-in-aid programs, Congress should pass legislation which stipulates that all federal per capita grants to states and other localities must use population figures adjusted to the undercount.

The method for correcting the undercount developed by the National Urban League as well as similar methods proposed by the Census Bureau, might be incorporated into such legislation.

EMPLOYMENT

5. A full employment program that would guarantee every American a job who wants to work and is able to work, should be adopted as national policy. Such a policy would include incentives to private industry to hire and

train workers, a modernized federal works program, and a vastly expanded public service employment program that would improve the nation's schools, hospitals, public safety, conservation and other essential public services.

6. The new Administration should make an early and meaningful commitment to affirmative action and should bring an end to efforts within the federal establishment to weaken affirmative action programs.

7. A National Youth Employment Program should be formulated and should include the following:

. Establishment of the right of all young people to the education and job-training experiences that will equip them for full participation in the economy.

. Passage of necessary laws, executive orders and the bringing of appropriate legal action to ensure that young people are not discriminated against in the job market by reason of age.

. Formation of a federal Youth Employment Agency to deal with problems of youth employment and to provide expanded opportunities for young people.

. Massive federal job-creation programs aimed specifically at young people, including public service jobs, expanded school-to-work programs, and incentives to the private sector. Such programs should be designed for maximum use of local community groups, with national coordination by the proposed Youth Employment Agency.

EDUCATION

8. A national commitment to improving the quality of public school education should be adopted and implemented by the federal government.

9. Black students in higher education have been particularly hard hit by the cut-back in federal education funds for scholarships and loans.

These funds should be reinstituted, and should give these students the chance to acquire education on all levels, including graduate degrees.

10. Black colleges are responsible for educating half of the black college graduates in this country. There should be an increase in federal support for these colleges. In addition, the federal government should show its support for assisting black colleges by appointing a National Advisory Council for Black Colleges.

11. In addition to fund cutbacks to higher education, there have been reductions in funds for demonstration educational projects, compensatory education program and special programs for pupils who need more educational resources. These funds should be reinstituted.

HOUSING

12. The new Administration should seize the earliest opportunity to redirect the Community Development Block Grant program so that it will become an effective tool for providing decent housing, suitable living environments, principally for low and moderate income persons, as mandated by legislation. This redirection can be accomplished by a rewriting of the rules and regulations for the program.

13. The Department of Housing and Urban Development should require a commitment from individual localities that they will move to overcome housing discrimination, as a precondition to receiving both federal housing subsidy grants and federal middle and upper income housing benefits, such as mortgage insurances.

14. The construction of new housing units should be raised to the 2.5 million units annual standard set by Congress. There should be an expansion of the availability of housing for families earning below median incomes through active programs of rent allowances, neighborhood maintenance

of rehabilitation projects, direct and indirect housing subsidies, construction of new housing units, and strict enforcement of federal civil rights law.

15. The Department of Housing and Urban Development should adopt as one of its primary objectives the economic integration of housing. While this is already listed as one of HUD's goals, only a negligible amount of funds is used for this purpose.

HEALTH

16. A national comprehensive, consumer-oriented, federally supported health security system should be developed to assure quality and accessible health care to all Americans regardless of race or economic condition.

17. Special efforts should be made on a national level to provide information, programmatic and financial support to black students to enter and complete education in the health-related disciplines. This health career information should be made available from kindergarten through college.

18. In light of the unequal life expectations of black and white Americans, Social Security regulations should be adjusted to provide more equitable renumeration to black Americans, until such time that the life expectancy differential between blacks and whites is more equal.

SOCIAL WELFARE

19. Emergency aid legislation providing assistance for persons who have exhausted unemployment benefits, who face delayed checks, personal emergency or other special circumstances should be passed. Attempts to cut back on the food stamp and school lunch program should be immediately halted.

20. A new national policy on the family must be established which includes family structures other than the nuclear family. This policy must embrace

other family structures and in order to do this,new research needs to be done particularly in the minority community to define "family," to identify factors allowing the family to function, to find resources used to accomplish this, to establish the needs of family members.

21. Social services to Americans must be overhauled so that the separate but unequal systems for delivering these services found today are eliminated. Eligibility for social services should be based upon need determined by the purpose, function and priority of the services, rather than by income. Services should be accessible and attainable. Consumers should be involved at the policy-making level and institutional racism must be prevented.

CRIME

22. A strong federal gun control law should be enacted.

23. New federal initiatives to deal with the problems of crime should be undertaken, but these initiatives should emphasize new programs of citizen participation in crime prevention, reforms of the criminal justice system, neighborhood based probation programs, services to accused offenders.

24. There should be a minority presence in research and program development in the criminal justice areas.

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